

NOV 13 1962

Approved For Release 2000/08/27 : CIA

POST & TIMES-STAR

EVENING 259,875

Cuba Versus Paris

Sen. Lausche of Ohio was on the job when he asked Chairman J. William Fulbright to call a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for a "complete briefing" on the Cuban situation.

"It is essential," said Sen. Lausche, "that we know what is happening, what agreement was made, to what extent it is being fulfilled and what, if any, are the future potential menaces to our country as a consequence of what has happened."

This committee has not met since Congress adjourned. Some members were briefed by President Kennedy just before and after his Oct. 22 television address, but apparently not since.

The senator asked that the committee be informed fully by officials of the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Department. This has been normal practice in past crises, even in wartime. It is no less important now, especially since the Kennedy Administration has elected to keep a tight lid on the news—spoon-feeding reporters only such items as it chooses to reveal.

But Sen. Fulbright brushed off the Lausche request because he was going to Paris to attend the NATO parliamentarians' conference, a periodical event which cannot match in gravity the situation in Cuba.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee (along with the similar committee in the House) is the public's "watchdog" over international affairs. If the public is not to be adequately informed, then at least this committee should be.

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